



# WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## Theme 2023 – “Solutions to Plastic Pollution”



**MANOJ SINHA**  
Lieutenant Governor  
Jammu & Kashmir

### Message

Environmental issues today occupy the center stage of discourse around the globe and the 'World Environment Day' celebrated on 5<sup>th</sup> June, is the most significant and largest environmental awareness outreach programme coordinated by United Nations Environment Programme since 1973. It is an opportunity to remind us of our responsibilities towards environment. This year's theme of '**Solutions to Plastic Pollution**' with a campaign, '**#BeatPlasticPollution**' is a call for everyone to join the global effort toward ending the plastic pollution.

Jammu & Kashmir occupies a unique place in the arena of global tourist destinations, primarily because of its snow-capped Himalayan mountains, magnificent peaks, rich forests, picturesque alpine meadows, serene lakes and streams. The tourism potential of our Himalayan landscape is however likely to be affected by climate change and environmental pollution. Among the pollutants, Plastic pollution of our lakes, wetlands, rivers and streams is a major concern which demands immediate attention of one and all.

The recently concluded G20 Tourism Meet in the UT of Jammu & Kashmir has firmly placed the UT in the international tourism map. It is thus imminent that we are all active participants in protecting the natural beauty of the region and strive to weed out plastic pollution that threatens the sustainability of the natural environment.

It is time for change. It is time to accelerate our actions to adopt suitable alternatives that are eco-friendly, and make necessary changes in our behavior and lifestyles. I therefore urge all the people to refuse the culture of trash and adopt the concept of circularity that will promote wellness and prosperity for us and for future generations. I am hopeful that each and every member of the society will consider this as their bounden duty to future generations and act responsibly.

*Manoj Sinha*  
**Manoj Sinha**



**Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, IAS**  
Chief Secretary  
Jammu & Kashmir

### Message

I am pleased to know that the Department of Ecology, Environment and Remote Sensing is observing World Environment Day on 5<sup>th</sup> of June, 2023. The day provides for a global platform to raise awareness about environmental issues, and to take remedial action. The theme for the current year's World Environment Day is 'Solutions to Plastic Pollution' under the campaign '**#BeatPlasticPollution**'. It is a reminder that people's actions on plastic pollution matters.

Globally about 300 million tonnes of plastic is produced annually, and half of which is thrown away. Only 10% to 13% of plastic products are recycled globally. According to official estimates, Jammu & Kashmir produces about 23,000 MT of plastic waste annually, out of which almost 40% is non-recyclable waste. The collection and disposal of plastic waste is a challenge and, in many towns, almost 25% of the plastic waste remains uncollected. Jammu & Kashmir is known for its natural beauty which translates into bigger tourist footfall supporting local livelihood. The conservation of the natural environs and the reduction of pollution especially plastic pollution are crucial for the long-term sustainability of the ecosystem and economy. The theme for this year thus holds immense significance in the local context. The government has launched Mission LIFE, under the guidance of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, which emphasizes on reducing the usage of plastics by the people, encouraging the producers to move towards benign products.

In this context, I would also like to highlight the impact of climate change that we are witnessing even in this part of the country, manifesting as unseasonal rainfall. This has adversely impacted our farmer friends. The challenges we face, such as climate change, deforestation, pollution, and loss of biodiversity, require immediate attention and collective effort. It is time to recognize the crucial role of nature in sustaining our planet and restoring its health.

I would also like to point out that the Department of Ecology, Environment & Remote Sensing has prepared the Climate Resilient City Action Plan for Jammu and Srinagar cities, which will assist all stakeholders to align themselves towards the common goal to build resilience into the cities and will go a long way in protecting us all from the vagaries of climate change. Together, let us take action, inspire others, and protect the environment for future generations.

*Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta*  
**Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta**



**Dheeraj Gupta, IAS**  
Principal Secretary to Govt.,  
Forest, Ecology & Environment  
Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

### Message

Celebrating the World Environment Day today reminds us again of our responsibilities towards environmental protection. This year's environmental awareness theme of 'Solutions to Plastic Pollution' under the slogan, 'Beat Plastic Pollution' coordinated by United Nations World Environment Programme (UNEP) has been adopted for generating the desired awareness about significance of protection of our natural landscapes against degradation by plastic pollution. In today's society the dependence on plastic products is very high, yet we have reached a point where we need to tune up our lifestyle to accommodate environmental concerns so that our future generations do not condemn us for our insensitivity towards the environment. Similarly, at official levels too we are required to formulate policies and put in place appropriate legal framework with a robust enforcement regime to protect our environment from plastic pollution. In this context, the Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir, being overwhelmingly sensitive to the issue, has already formulated its Action Plan for Plastic Waste Management way back in 2019.

I am happy that the Forest Department and the sister Departments have mobilized the stakeholders and student community to generate environmental awareness through conduct of painting competitions and cleanliness drives across the UT of Jammu and Kashmir which primary aims to get rid of plastic pollution. These activities were undertaken under the umbrella of 'Mission LIFE' rolled out by the Government of India. The activities under the Mission have already been launched in the UT of J&K and it gives me pleasure to inform that more than 15,000 programmes were organised across the UT under the Mission. I am sure these efforts will generate the sufficient environmental awareness among our masses leading to desired changes in behaviour and lifestyle.

I urge the citizens of Jammu & Kashmir to come forward and become a part of this environmental journey leading to the protection of our natural environmental heritage.

*Dheeraj Gupta*  
**Dheeraj Gupta**



**Roshan Jaggi, IFS**  
PCCF/HoFF  
J&K Forest Department,  
Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

### Message

World Environment Day is celebrated each year on 5<sup>th</sup> of June. United Nations, in 1973 decided to observe June 5 as "World Environment Day" to sensitize people towards their responsibilities of protecting and preserving environment for sustaining healthy life on planet earth. Climate Change triggered by increased emissions of greenhouse gases is posing one of the most serious challenges to humanity and if remedial measures are not taken, the very existence of life on earth may be threatened.

The environmental degradation including the most daunting challenge of climate change is the result of different human activities and the behavioral change in individuals has been observed as one of the most effective solutions to the problem. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, presented the idea of LIFE – Life Style for environment, before the World Community in 2021, which envisages to bring about changes in our life style at individual and Community level to align with our cultural ethos of environmental protection and Conservation. We need to understand that to meet our needs, natural resources have to be used judiciously so that the Mother Earth remains a sustainable place for our future generations to come.

Department of Forest and other sister wings along with other stakeholders viz educational institutions, NGOs, PRI's and Civil Societies at large have been actively carrying forward "Mission Life Campaign" to drive home the idea of environment friendly life style so as to bring about behavioral changes in all sections of Society. Department is laying focus on scaling up / plantation activities, rejuvenation of water bodies and improving quality of natural forests with the involvement of local people, to mitigate the potential effects of climate change.

Department solicits the cooperation, support and assistance of all esteemed citizens in carrying forward the environment conservation endeavors.

*Roshan Jaggi*  
**Roshan Jaggi**



**S. Rakesh Kumar, IFS**  
Director,  
Ecology, Environment & Remote Sensing,  
Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

### Message

Today as we celebrate World Environment Day, let us all pause for a moment and reflect on the ramifications of our collective action and inaction on the fate of our planet. Consumed by our daily workloads, we chose to disregard the impact of our actions on the ability of Earth to sustain life. Considering that there is no other alternative for life to exist, what we do today will go on to define the fate of our future generations. Every year, the United Nations, through the theme of World Environment Day, draws the attention of people to an issue of environmental importance, and this year's theme - 'Solutions to Plastic Pollution' lays emphasis on plastic pollution.

Plastics have become an integral part of our daily life. However, the use of plastics, particularly the single use plastics, has created a culture of trash. This culture is contrary to our tradition of living in harmony with nature. Resultantly, today a whopping 35 lakh tonnes of plastic waste is generated annually in the country, of which approximately only 50 per cent is recycled. It is important to appreciate that not all plastics can be recycled. The multi-layered plastics used as packets for consumer goods are not recyclable and hence mostly burnt, causing air pollution. Likewise, Single-use plastics, like plastic bags, straws, coffee stirrers, water bottles and most food packaging constitute approximately half of all plastic waste. This is the major menace that afflicts us collectively. The silver lining however is that our per capita plastic consumption is low at 13.6 kg, as compared to 108 kg in the U.S., 56 kg in China, and 30 kg globally.

The UT of Jammu and Kashmir is blessed with unparalleled scenic beauty. Littering of landscape and waterscape by plastic waste deteriorates the quality of these natural assets. While the government has enacted a ban on single-use plastics from July 1, 2022, the effective implementation of this ban would not be possible without the cooperation of people. It thus, not only requires our collective effort but also our collective resolve. We have to consciously endeavor to bring about change in our behavior to reverse this habit of use and throw. Honoring our commitment to the future generations, I request and urge one and all to go from '**Free Plastic to Plastic Free**'.

*S. Rakesh Kumar*  
**S. Rakesh Kumar**

#MissionLIFE

ISSUED IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST BY:

#BeatPlasticPollution

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